

**TOWNSHIP OF DERRY
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 13, 2016 – 5:30 PM**

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Marc A. Moyer, called the September 13, 2016 Public Hearing of the Township of Derry Board of Supervisors to order at 5:30 pm in the meeting room of the Township of Derry Municipal Complex, 600 Clearwater Road, Hershey, PA. A roll call was performed after the Pledge of Allegiance.

IN ATTENDANCE:

SUPERVISORS

Marc A. Moyer, Chairman
John W. Foley, Jr., Vice Chairman
Justin C. Engle, Secretary
Matthew A. Weir
Susan M. Cort

ALSO PRESENT:

James N. Negley, Township Manager and Treasurer
Jill Henry, Assistant Township Manager
Chuck Emerick, Director of Community Development
Garth Warner, Chief of Police
Jon A. Yost, Township Solicitor
Julie Echterling, Recorder

Public in Attendance:

Chuck Simmons, Mike Erdman, Scott Sutherland, Steven King, Rick Gilbert, Darren Cotten, Ken Shank, Marc Breckenmaker, Larry Moyer, Loretta Smith, and Charles Huth.

INTRODUCTION:

Chairman Moyer stated this is a public hearing regarding the Township of Derry Police Department Communications Center and the advantages and disadvantages of operating its own Center.

PRESENTATION

Chief Warner spoke about the history of the Dispatch Center. He spoke about the accreditation and the quality of the center. He spoke about how the dispatchers get to know the officers personally. Below are the some of the advantages he spoke about in having the Township Dispatch Center:

- Familiar with layout of Township and can provide the accurate location of incidents.
- They are the clearinghouse for all Derry Police Department warrants.
- Dispatchers received 26,000 calls in 2015
- Residents call and ask for local assistance.
- Dispatch employees are hired and maintained by the Township.
- 24-hour operations access for Police and the community.
- Assist the EOC during operation.
- 24-hour monitoring of security cameras and emergency call boxes.
- Visitors come to the center for assistance, which is provided by the dispatchers.

He spoke about the potential consequences of closing the Township's dispatch center and transferring the calls to the County call center. He highlighted the following consequences:

- Loss of Dispatchers who know the inner-working of the operations of the Township and the Police Department.
- Loss of immediate intercommunication with the public and major entity partners.
- Loss of CLEAN/NCIC Terminal.

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- Inability to conduct bookings and fingerprints for employment purposes.
- EOC issues.
- Alarms and cameras not being monitored 24/7.

He spoke about the revenues of the booking center which were used to purchase needed items including a \$50,000 prisoner transportation van. He spoke about costs for maintaining the desk at the center for the visitors and residents who come into the building for assistance. He stated the savings from closing the dispatch center would be minimal.

He thanked the Board for the opportunity to address them on this issue. He stated the services provided by the Township Dispatch center cannot be duplicated at the County. He stated Dauphin County would have to add staff and equipment. He stated this service is vital to the Police Department and the officers stand by the Dispatch center.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Chuck Simmons, Tanger Outlets, spoke about how everything in the Township is first class. He spoke about his relationship with the police department and how vital the dispatch center is to the outlets. Losing the dispatch center would be a step backward for the Township. He stated they would hate to see the dispatch center go to the County.

Mr. Darren Cotten, President of Police Association and Township resident, spoke about officer safety and how the dispatch center helps with this cause. He spoke about citizens who call and how helpful it is to the residents and that won't be offered by County. He spoke about calling as a resident and the service he receives. He spoke about officers doing speed traps during a nice day, which would need to be scheduled, days and weeks in advance, if dispatch went to the County.

Mr. Scott Sutherland, HMC Security, spoke about the positive relationship they have with the dispatch center. He spoke about the intimate relationship they have with the police force. He spoke about how HMC is a 24/7 center with a lot of issues that occur at night. He spoke about how helpful the dispatch center is with these events.

Mr. Steven King, HMC Radiology, spoke about safety regarding his department. He spoke about the rapid response that could be potentially needed in case of an incident. He feels the dispatch center is vitally important to their operations.

Mr. Jason White, HE&R, stated he endorses and supports the Township's dispatch center. He spoke about the unique situation they have and how helpful the Police and center are to their operations. He spoke about being able to speak and coordinate with the Police and the center. He spoke about how quickly information can be distributed with traffic management with the dispatch center. He spoke about how the dispatch center has helped cut the response time with incidents.

Mr. Rick Gilbert, Milton Hershey School, spoke about how important the direct line of communication through the dispatch center is to their campus. He stated the dispatchers know their school and are able

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to direct the officers. He stated the stakeholders are opposed to the closing of the dispatch center and taking away a key piece of public safety.

Mr. Scott Buchla, HMC Lifeline, spoke about how the dispatch center has helped them with some of the EMS calls and helping them identify “Jane Does”. He spoke about working with them with the EOC and how intertwined they are with the Police Department. He spoke how important it is to have the direct communication with the Township’s public safety and how the dispatch center helps.

Mr. Pat O’Rourke, Hersey Company and former Derry Township Chief of Police, spoke about how the dispatch center helps the morale of the police officers. He spoke about how it enhances public safety overall especially with recent current events. He spoke about the residents who call in and are comforted along with those who come to the lobby and are helped. He spoke about the team work involved with natural disasters and the dispatchers. He spoke about how important the dispatchers are to Hershey Company. He spoke about all the entities being here tonight asking to keep the dispatch center here in the Township.

Mrs. Lisa Miller, Derry School District, spoke about how important the dispatch center is to the school. She spoke about the unique situation they have, to be able to communicate with the dispatchers for the school. She spoke about an incident last year where a child’s life was saved because of the dispatch center’s functions. She spoke about the great team they have and how well they serve the community together.

Mr. Mike Erdman, HMC and Township resident, spoke about the great pride he has for the Township he lives in. He spoke about his role at HMC and how important the dispatch center is for their work. He stated a lot of people travel through Hershey in a year and they feel safe because of the Township’s setup with public safety including the dispatch center.

BOARD QUESTIONS/COMMENTS:

Supervisor Engle stated he had questions to ask. Supervisor Cort thanked everyone for coming out tonight and speaking. She spoke about how Derry Township is the only one in Dauphin County with a dispatch center. Chairman Moyer stated he would like to hear from Dauphin County before closing the hearing. He asked the record for this hearing be left open until Dauphin County has a chance to speak on this matter. An additional meeting will be advertised and planned on this matter.

ADJOURNMENT:

Vice Chairman Foley made a motion to adjourn this portion of the public hearing at 6:41 p.m. Chairman Moyer seconded the motion. **Motion carried 5-0.**

SUBMITTED BY:

Justin C. Engle
Township Secretary

Julie Echterling
Recorder

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